United Nations PBC/4/SLE/SR.1

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
2 November 2010

Original: English

Peacebuilding Commission

Fourth session

Sierra Leone configuration

Summary record of the 1st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 28 September 2010, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. McNee (Canada)

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10-55783 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/4/SLE/2)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Review of the outcome of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone (PBC/4/SLE/L.1)

2. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the draft review of the outcome of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone (PBC/4/SLE/L.1), which drew on the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change prepared by the Government of Sierra Leone in collaboration with its international partners and civil society. The Sierra Leonean Government was to be congratulated for its leadership in preparing the joint progress report, which amply documented the strides that Sierra Leone had made towards sustainable peace and long-term development, as well as for the inclusive and consultative manner in which the drafting process had taken place. He was also grateful to the members of the Sierra Leone configuration for producing a concrete and forward-looking outcome document in response to the joint progress report, within tight time constraints, and to the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the Peacebuilding Support Office for their invaluable support.

3. The first line of paragraph 21 of the draft review of the outcome of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone (PBC/4/SLE/L.1) should read "Commit themselves to pursuing the recommendations outlined in paragraph 20 above" rather than "... in paragraph 19 above", as paragraph 21 was intended to refer to recommendations addressed to international partners.

4. He took it that the members of the Sierra Leone configuration wished to adopt the draft review of the outcome of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone (PBC/4/SLE/L.1), as orally revised.

5. *It was so decided.*

6. **Ms. Bangura** (Sierra Leone) said that her Government valued the Commission's vital role in mobilizing and coordinating international support for stability and growth in Sierra Leone and was grateful to the members of the country-specific configuration for their continued engagement. Sierra Leone was making significant progress in consolidating peace, amidst a plethora of daunting challenges, including pervasive poverty. Since poverty reduction was key to peace consolidation, efforts should be intensified to scale up resource mobilization and technical assistance for the effective implementation of the Agenda for Change, which had been endorsed at the June 2009 High-level Special Session of the Sierra Leone configuration as the core strategy document for peace consolidation in the country, focusing on the four priority areas of agriculture, transportation, energy resources and human development.

7. While her Government appreciated the support given by the international community and its bilateral partners, the efforts made to achieve progress in such areas as decentralization, the fight against corruption and drugs trafficking, human rights, economic governance and security and stability had not been matched by the inflow of resources normally required for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery processes. It was time to ensure that Sierra Leone could fulfil its role as a successful model for peacebuilding.

8. **Mr. Kamara** (Sierra Leone), recalling that the Agenda for Change had been prepared and adopted, and was being implemented, through inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive consultations and countrywide participation, said that the joint progress report also represented the combined efforts of all branches of Government, working together with civil society, development partners and UNIPSIL. The aim of the report was to inform the public and the international community about progress achieved in implementing the priorities set out in the Agenda for Change, the challenges faced and the future actions envisaged.

9. The first precondition for meeting the goals of the Agenda for Change was to maintain peace and security. Having held two cycles of peaceful, credible and fair elections at the national and local levels, his Government was determined to ensure that the forthcoming elections in 2012 were similarly successful. To that end, it was already working together with national agencies, civil society and development partners to prepare for the elections, with an emphasis on logistics, security, and technical and financial support. Sierra Leone had also made important progress in consolidating its democracy through

transparency and accountability measures, including the recent enactment of a new Freedom of Information Act, new legislation to strengthen the Anti-Corruption Commission and the establishment of an independent public broadcasting organization.

10. The Government's efforts to spearhead the transition of Sierra Leone from a post-conflict country to a stable and peaceful democracy entailed a transition for its development partners. The United Nations now had more of a peacebuilding than a peacekeeping role, while the Government's dialogue with its development partners was gradually focusing less on immediate peace and security concerns and more on normal development issues. However, despite the country's transition from immediate post-conflict status, the importance of national security should not be overlooked. Although steps had been taken, for example, to improve cooperation between the armed forces and the police, and between the armed forces and civil society, there were manifold threats to national security, including unexpected problems such as the illegal drugs transit between South America and Europe, which called for a regional response. Better regional security was therefore a high priority for the Government.

11. A sound economy would make it easier to consolidate peace and democracy. The Government of Sierra Leone had managed its economy quite well in the years since the war and had successfully weathered the global financial and economic crisis, despite a slowdown in 2009. The economy was now rebounding, and was expected to further accelerate once mining production had recovered. Agriculture and fisheries would also continue to contribute to growth. Internal revenue generation was still low but growing, partly as a result of the new goods and services tax. Further revenue growth should be achieved once increased mining activities started to make a significant contribution, enabling the Government to improve the services provided to the country's citizens.

12. In tandem with its focus on economic management, the Government had also been working to achieve broad-based public sector reform, with regard to both staffing levels and financial management. Among a raft of measures, it had introduced substantial changes in conditions of service for health sector personnel and was rolling out planning and accounting software to all ministries, departments and Government agencies. In 2009, it had relaunched the decentralization process, reconfirming its commitment to further devolution of central government functions to local councils, which were now delivering a significant share of public services.

13. Efforts had also been made to improve citizens' access to basic services by eliminating user fees. The recent initiative to provide free health care for pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under age 5 was a major step forward, although it had stretched the Government's financial resources and human capacity. Other projects involved constructing clean water supply systems and bringing children and youth into the education system. While gross school enrolment had significantly increased, net enrolment seemed to have stabilized and drop-out rates remained high, especially for girls. Moreover, it was proving difficult to maintain or improve quality, with high pupil-to-book and teacher-to-pupil ratios. Skills development and technical and vocational education, which were important tools for addressing youth unemployment, also needed to be improved.

14. Recognizing the importance of agriculture for poverty reduction, food security and job creation, the Government had established a sector strategy, using the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) approach, and had also launched a smallholder commercialization programme to improve productivity, provide better support to subsistence farmers and strengthen their access to markets. Production of many crops continued to grow and agriculture was beginning to play a vital role on export markets, accounting for 20 per cent of the country's total exports in 2009. Further export growth was expected, especially in cocoa. Sierra Leone's fisheries also held growth potential, despite the current problems of illegal fishing and use of illegal equipment, often by artisanal fishermen. The Government was engaging in surveillance and fining those caught fishing illegally; at the same time, it was working with artisanal fishermen to improve their equipment, landing sites and production facilities. Government income from the sector was now growing significantly, and work was under way on the quality control measures needed for the export of marine and fish products.

15. The mining sector was increasingly becoming central to the country's growth prospects, given the discovery of larger than anticipated iron ore deposits and the potential for future offshore oil production. The

Government had recently signed some major mining agreements, whose current shortcomings would likely be overcome with the help of the technical support promised by the country's development partners. The Government was fully aware of the challenges and risks associated with such agreements, including the reliability of the internal revenues generated, the extent and predictability of corporate social responsibility and environmental engagement, and the need for effective monitoring. It also remained mindful of the expectations raised by the agreements and the risks of dependence on mining, including the risk of creating a dual economy.

16. Electricity generation had greatly increased in the last year, particularly with the commissioning of the Bumbuna hydropower station, and the Government was considering further substantial increases in hydropower generation capacity in the future. Transmission and distribution were lagging behind, however, although ongoing work to rehabilitate lines and equipment, together with the installation of pre-paid meters, should enhance the reliability of supply to homes and companies. The Government had also begun a rural electrification drive, with pilot solar power provision and mini-hydro schemes, and had established a comprehensive new sector strategy, which should also improve sector governance.

17. Transport was another important driver of growth, especially for agriculture and the delivery of social services; the Government was therefore implementing a major feeder roads rehabilitation programme, with a target of 2,000 km to be rehabilitated by 2012. The runway at the international airport had been resurfaced and new navigation systems installed to improve flight safety; negotiations for a container terminal concession at the seaport were nearing completion; and there had been significant public investment in upgrading ports and rural jetties to improve river transportation.

18. Lastly, all Government policies were geared towards achieving economic growth primarily through private sector activities; the Government was working to improve the business environment for existing companies and attract new ones, for example, by addressing business bottlenecks such as land tenure and security. Many expressions of interest, not only in mineral resources, but also in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism, had been received following the launch of a new private sector development strategy in 2009, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry was working with the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency to conclude concrete business deals. The Government, with donor support, had established a clear policy for managing the country's natural resources. In that connection, a new Core Mineral Policy had been formulated and a Mining and Minerals Act had been enacted in 2009, both of which had robust environmental provisions.

19. With regard to the major risks identified in the Agenda for Change, the Government had strengthened the Anti-Corruption Commission, it was enhancing transparency through the asset declaration initiative, which applied to the President, ministers and all other public officials, and it had established a Transnational Organized Crime Unit with the intention of working closely with other countries in the region to combat organized crime. It was also addressing youth unemployment in a number of ways, including through the establishment of a National Youth Commission, as well as by launching public sector job creation programmes and encouraging schemes to bring young people into gainful employment.

20. The joint progress report highlighted the need for increased financial and technical support from Sierra Leone's development partners. The Government of Sierra Leone would continue to rely on the Commission's convening powers and advocacy strength to urge the international community to rally behind the effective implementation of the Agenda for Change. Further progress was needed on the Commission's recommendation regarding the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund to finance implementation of the Agenda for Change, while challenges also remained in terms of strengthening aid coordination. The Commission might therefore wish to reiterate its recommendation that Member States and development partners should make pledges to that fund.

21. **The Chairperson** said it was clear that, despite the remarkable progress made, further support was now needed in order to complete peace consolidation in Sierra Leone, particularly in view of the forthcoming elections in 2012.

22. **Ms. Cheng-Hopkins** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) commended the Government of Sierra Leone for its very informative report, which clearly showed the considerable progress

that had been made towards the goals of the Agenda for Change as well as the challenges still faced. In view of those remaining challenges, it was particularly important for the international community to strengthen its commitments to the Government of Sierra Leone in order to ensure that the Agenda for Change could be fully realized. Bearing in mind that Sierra Leone was rich in natural resources and agricultural potential, it was encouraging to learn that internal revenue generation was growing, since that boded well for the Government's own contribution to the peacebuilding process. She also welcomed the Commission's refocus on the primary areas of good governance and the rule of law, especially multi-party dialogue and democratic governance, the issue of corruption, preparations for the 2012 elections, and capacity to maintain the rule of law. Those were now particularly appropriate areas for the Commission's engagement in view of the experience it had gained since 2006.

23. The funds of $37 million initially allocated to Sierra Leone from the Peacebuilding Fund had been almost completely expended and discussions on a second tranche were under way. Although no details were available as yet, that tranche would be smaller owing to the effect of the financial crisis on the Fund's revenues, as well as the impact of additional countries coming onto the Commission's agenda or seeking resources from the Fund. Following discussions with the Government, it had been decided that the focus of the new tranche would be the preparations for the 2012 elections. Although there was considerable concern in Sierra Leone that those elections could be a flashpoint for violence, there was still time to put safeguards in place to ensure that they proceeded peacefully. Many valuable proposals were being discussed, in such areas as dialogue with non-State actors, leadership development, reparation and youth employment, and more specific details should soon be available.

24. Resource mobilization by the Commission had not proved very successful to date. Both the Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office should do more to obtain detailed information on donors and thus develop more targeted strategies for the Commission to use in raising funds.

25. **Mr. Schulenburg** (Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)) said that Sierra Leone had come a long way since the configuration was established in 2005. At the time, most Sierra Leoneans were still focused on the consequences of the civil war, whereas currently they were more preoccupied with moving forward. Despite a few glitches caused by the financial crisis, there had been considerable economic progress, with improvements in agricultural production, road construction and efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. After only eight years following its brutal civil war, Sierra Leone had a functioning multi-party system; free political activity; a free press; a vibrant civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and no human rights abuses. The country had also been somewhat successful in combating corruption and drug trafficking.

26. Despite those positive indicators, many challenges remained, including the traditional ones of poverty and youth unemployment, and new ones in the mining sector as the country moved slowly from a state of donor dependency to one of dependency on mining companies. The upcoming elections in 2012 represented another challenge. Over the five-year life of the configuration, the Peacebuilding Commission had registered many successes. It represented a forum for policy dialogue with the international community on issues ranging from peace and stability to humanitarian affairs and other developmental concerns. It had overseen the initial transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, with the attendant shift in emphasis from security and stability to development.

27. The issue of national ownership marked another step forward. The joint progress report had been prepared entirely by Sierra Leone Government officials, with some editorial help from the Secretariat and input from donors and civil society, but without the help of any external consultant. Sierra Leone was indeed the only country in the world which had been able to produce such a single combined progress report, and the Peacebuilding Commission should be commended for that achievement. The United Nations family had also agreed on national execution and an integrated approach and was holding discussions with the Government on how to best ensure national ownership and still guarantee that the funds received from donors were well spent. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation, created with the support of UNIPSIL and the United Nations country team, had become one of the leading independent public service broadcasters in Africa.

28. By agreeing on one strategy and one monitoring mechanism, the Peacebuilding Commission had gone a long way towards implementing the recommendations of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The criteria to be included in the next report would be drawn from the report on the Millennium Development Goals, among other sources, and would be developed in cooperation with the Government, bilateral donors and all members of the United Nations system in the country.

29. One of the major achievements in Sierra Leone was United Nations integration. The 2009 report of the Secretary-General had indicated that Sierra Leone was the country with the highest level of integration of United Nations activities in the world. The Organization had agreed on one strategy for Sierra Leone, with a political and a development mandate, five priority areas and 21 programmes, all linked to the Government's Agenda for Change. There were clear benchmarks and success criteria and clear methods of joint implementation. For donors, such streamlining would translate into a higher return on every dollar contributed to the multi-donor trust fund or any other facility.

30. Sierra Leone could be a success story for other post-conflict and peacebuilding environments. It would be devastating if all the work done in the area of integration and the adoption of a strategic focus faltered owing to a lack of funding. When the multi-donor trust fund had been launched, the idea had been to raise $200 million for the 21 programmes. To date, only $10 million out of the $200 million needed for the peacebuilding programme had been delivered. He hoped that all parties would come together to participate in the success of Sierra Leone.

31. **The Chairperson** said that the draft review of the outcome of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone (PBC/4/SLE/L.1), just adopted, accomplished two important tasks by focusing the Commission's engagement on the area of good governance and the rule of law and committing the Commission to taking further steps to mobilize resources. Over the coming months, the Sierra Leone configuration would focus more specifically on multi-party dialogue and democratic governance, corruption, preparations for free, fair and peaceful elections in 2012, and capacity to maintain the rule of law, in particular with respect to the Sierra Leone police and courts. Those were the areas of risk to peace consolidation that had been identified by national stakeholders when the Commission's delegation had visited Sierra Leone in March 2010. Youth unemployment and drug trafficking would also remain priority areas.

32. With regard to resource mobilization, which had emerged as a major challenge during the delegation's discussions with national stakeholders, the onus was on the members of the Sierra Leone configuration to become more creative in moving beyond traditional donors and traditional aid modalities.

33. **Mr. Cravinho** (Portugal) commended the representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone for their very honest and clear presentations and praised the work accomplished by the Sierra Leonean authorities to date. Sierra Leone should be recognized as a success story, and although it still faced challenges as it moved towards milestone elections in 2012, the Commission's experience with the country should be seen as exemplary for West Africa as a whole, as well as for other country-specific configurations. While important steps towards peace consolidation and economic development had already been taken, especially in the areas of good governance and decentralization, the risks identified in the Agenda for Change, particularly illicit drug trafficking, corruption and youth unemployment, continued to give cause for concern. Portugal stood ready to continue helping Sierra Leone, both bilaterally and with the European Union, to combat those problems. In that connection, the issues of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime should be addressed regionally, through measures such as the West Africa Coast Initiative, since they posed a major risk to the whole region. The positive measures taken by the Sierra Leonean authorities to fight corruption should also be continued.

34. The issue of youth unemployment, which gave rise to a plethora of other problems, must be addressed. In that regard, Portugal stood ready to support Sierra Leone in implementing appropriate training initiatives, including in the medical area. More generally, it remained committed to supporting the country's efforts in the European Union and the United Nations, with a view to consolidating peace, stability and democracy in Sierra Leone and the whole West African region. The elections to be held in 2012 would be very important; in that connection, he urged the Sierra Leonean authorities to continue promoting strong multi-party

dialogue in the spirit of the joint communiqué of 2 April 2009 in order to advance national reconciliation and strengthen national cohesion.

35. **Mr. Gutiérrez** (Peru) welcomed the ongoing and direct dialogue between national and international actors made possible by the participation of Sierra Leonean Government representatives at the current meeting. He also congratulated the authorities and people of Sierra Leone for the progress achieved in implementing the Agenda for Change. While many challenges remained, his delegation was convinced that the country was on the right path to achieve its goals.

36. With regard to youth unemployment, one of the three areas where the Commission had identified a particular need for concrete and sustainable action, his delegation underlined the importance of the new youth employment strategy, the establishment of a National Youth Commission, and the appointment of a Youth Commissioner. The links between youth unemployment, security and economic development should, in particular, be borne in mind, since unemployed youth were more vulnerable to drug trafficking and violence. It was therefore vital to create financial incentives that encouraged employers to hire young people, particularly single mothers, and to establish inclusive financing mechanisms providing access to a range of financial services, not merely microcredit, in order to help young men and women enter productive employment. Resource mobilization for such initiatives was important; a good example was the programme for private sector development and employment promotion managed by the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ). Measures to stimulate agricultural production were also an important means of providing employment opportunities in rural areas.

37. The experiences disseminated by the Working Group on Lessons Learned should be taken into account. In that regard, it would perhaps be advisable to identify those groups of young people who would most likely be used to promote conflict, with a view to giving them priority in the social inclusion and training process. As highlighted in the summary of the Working Group's recent meeting on "Youth Employment in Peacebuilding", held on 14 July 2010, the aim was for youth to become agents of change, economic development and conflict prevention.

38. In the area of governance, initiatives such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission contributed to greater transparency. Implementation of the joint communiqué and multi-party dialogue were essential in order to consolidate recognition of the Government and the opposition. Respect for the rule of law was also vital if efforts to promote economic growth were to succeed, since the two factors were closely linked and mutually reinforcing. Sierra Leone needed a political platform that allowed the development of a tolerant and inclusive multi-party system, with an appropriate balance of powers and an independent and impartial judiciary. It was also important to continue with public sector reform and decentralization of the public administration. In that context, preparations for the 2012 elections were particularly important. Although the Commission, national actors and international partners all needed to work together, the commitment of national actors was especially crucial for the implementation of the necessary reforms.

39. While Sierra Leone had made considerable efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking and money-laundering, which constituted major threats to its peace and development, more resources were needed. Regional and international cooperation was therefore required to support the Transnational Organized Crime Unit in carrying out its tasks and training its staff, including in the areas of legal expertise, technical assistance and logistical support.

40. Notwithstanding the focus on youth unemployment, governance and illicit drug trafficking, attention should also be given to other areas, including health, education, access to clean water and infrastructure development, which were especially important in view of the 2015 target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In particular, the use of clean stoves, which was significantly reducing respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases in his own country, could help lower the still high rates of maternal and child mortality in Sierra Leone. He therefore called for international cooperation to distribute such stoves more widely in Sierra Leone.

41. **Mr. Mayr-Harting** (Austria) welcomed the conclusions and recommendations of the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change and commended the Government of Sierra Leone, UNIPSIL, the United Nations country team, international partners and civil society for the inclusive, comprehensive and detailed manner in which the report had been prepared. The

Government of Sierra Leone had made steady progress in addressing some of the country's most pressing priorities. With regard to youth unemployment, it had taken measures aimed at integrating young people into the workforce. Its new youth employment strategy and proposed National Youth Commission were also positive developments. In the area of drug trafficking, the Government had decided to transform the Joint Drug Interdiction Task Force into a Transnational Crime Unit under the West Africa Coast Initiative. It had also taken important steps in an effort to curb corruption in the country.

42. The task facing the Government and all its partners was to ensure that all those successes became irreversible, considering the many socio-economic challenges which could still undermine Sierra Leone's long-term economic development. The focus should continue to be on priority areas such as good governance and the rule of law, youth employment and drug trafficking. In view of the upcoming elections, enhanced and inclusive political dialogue was of crucial importance and conditions must be created to ensure that the elections were free, fair and peaceful. Austria fully supported the draft resolution to lift sanctions against Sierra Leone, as yet another testament to the major strides made in the country.

43. **Mr. Serrano** (European Union) welcomed the comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change and fully endorsed the recommendations of the outcome document of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone held on 10 June 2009 (PBC/3/SLE/6). The Government of Sierra Leone should be commended for the tangible progress it had made towards peace consolidation and economic development; for prioritizing the health of women and children through its free health-care initiative; and for introducing the new smallholder commercialization plan, to provide the poorest citizens with better nutrition opportunities and smallholder farmers with a steady income, while reducing the country's reliance on imported produce. Although Sierra Leone had made significant progress in many areas, corruption, illicit drug trafficking and youth unemployment still represented major obstacles to lasting peace and development. It was important for the Government and all its partners to ensure that contracts with extractive industries were carefully managed and that the elections in 2012 were free, fair and peaceful.

44. The European Union remained highly committed to the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone and to working with the other members of the configuration to develop a resource mobilization strategy aimed at bridging existing funding gaps for Sierra Leone. The current allocation to Sierra Leone under the European Development Fund, managed by the European Commission, represented a total of nearly $300 million for the period until 2013, focusing on good governance, rehabilitation of primary infrastructure and general budget support. The European Union was working with the Economic Community of West African States on a €16 million programme to fight drug trafficking in the whole subregion, and was funding a programme through its Instrument for Stability, focusing on the cocaine routes between Latin America, Africa and Europe.

45. **Mr. Quinlan** (Australia) said that the Government of Sierra Leone, UNIPSIL, the United Nations country team, international partners and civil society should all be commended for the comprehensive and inclusive approach adopted in the preparation of the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change. As youth unemployment was potentially a destabilizing element for the peacebuilding process, efforts should be made to improve employment opportunities for young people in Sierra Leone. To assist the Government of Sierra Leone in that regard, the Government of Australia would provide support to peacebuilding initiatives in the agricultural sector, in particular, to support the smallholder commercialization component of the Government's National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan 2010-2030.

46. The mining sector accounted for 30 per cent of the country's gross domestic product, and increased trade and investment arising from private sector involvement in the sector would be key to the future prosperity of Sierra Leone. While it was important to develop the mining sector, it was even more important to ensure that such development was accompanied by greater transparency in the management of the country's natural and mineral resources. Australia welcomed the Government's commitment to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and would assist in strengthening the Government's capacity to manage and regulate the mining sector by providing fellowships and post-graduate awards for mining capacity development.

47. The 2012 elections represented a significant step forward for democracy and peace consolidation in Sierra Leone. While the joint progress report rightly acknowledged advances which had been made in the preparation of the elections, they still represented a potential flashpoint for violence. Consequently, the focus should continue to be on mitigating the potential risks associated with the elections. Australia would continue to support Sierra Leone in its ongoing efforts to build a tolerant, inclusive and effective multi-party political system and to encourage strengthened participation of women in decision-making at all levels.

48. **Mr. Chabi** (Morocco) said that while Sierra Leone stood as a model for other configurations in terms of peacebuilding strategies, the country still faced many challenges, including youth unemployment and economic development. As a country with vast experience in South-South cooperation, Morocco had joined forces with 21 other African countries to launch an initiative that focused on areas such as fisheries and transport infrastructure in order to establish a network of harbours across West Africa. The Government of Morocco stood ready to cooperate with the Government of Sierra Leone and the private sector in developing key sectors of the economy, including fisheries, agriculture, forestry, mining and transportation.

49. On the political front, the country had a good national aid policy, although better coordination among donors was needed. With regard to the Peacebuilding Fund, $37 million had already been allocated, but that amount was expected to be increased for the next tranche to be negotiated with the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Government of Sierra Leone. While the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding was important, the shift from peacebuilding to development was even more critical for the future stability of the country.

50. **Mr. Sumi** (Japan) said that for Sierra Leone to sustain the progress it had made in the area of peace and democratic governance, the 2012 elections must be fair, free and peaceful. They should help Sierra Leone shift its focus from security to development. In that regard, Japan supported the draft resolution to extend the mandate of UNIPSIL to 15 September 2011 and to focus on preparations for the 2012 elections. Water and energy supply must also be stabilized. Japan had always assisted Sierra Leone through grants-in-aid and technical cooperation for a stable power supply, as exemplified by the provision of generators for the Kingtom power station. It had also provided funding to improve water facilities and help the country cope with natural disasters such as floods.

51. Food security should be ensured by strengthening the agricultural sector and creating jobs. Japan had, for example, supported the establishment of an agricultural management system in Kambia district. It had funded a multi-stakeholder project of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) for youth training. With regard to drug trafficking, it was important for Sierra Leone to make sure that its efforts dovetailed with those of the Peacebuilding Commission and the West Africa Coast Initiative.

52. **Mr. Wittig** (Germany) welcomed the joint report on the Agenda for Change and the considerable progress made in fostering peace and democracy in Sierra Leone. That country stood as an example to be emulated within the framework of the Peacebuilding Commission. Germany would continue to support stability and reconstruction in Sierra Leone, in particular through its involvement in youth employment programmes. Germany had decided to double its contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund, which it considered a vital tool for the strengthening of national institutions. It would be contributing $5 million to the Fund by the end of 2010.

53. It was important to keep up the fight against corruption, continue implementing the Agenda for Change and ensure that the 2012 elections were fair and free, in order to maintain political stability. Given the importance of the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Germany had pledged an additional $1.3 million to the work of the Special Court. Lastly, Sierra Leone would also benefit from deeper cooperation among member States of the Mano River Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

54. **Mr. Crowley** (South Africa) welcomed the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change and supported the goals, spirit and vision of the review of the outcome of the High-level Special Session of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone. The Agenda for Change had created the ideal platform for strengthening

governance, human resources development, the rule of law and human rights in Sierra Leone.

55. Despite the achievements noted on implementation of the Agenda for Change, support from both national and international stakeholders was vital for Sierra Leone to remain on a forward-looking path. In that connection, the Peacebuilding Fund established to attract new donors for the implementation of the Joint Vision of the United Nations Family for Sierra Leone and the Agenda for Change had not received the requisite support to enable the Government to implement its programme at the level and speed required.

56. The international community should therefore rise to the challenge of assisting Sierra Leone in its efforts to build and strengthen its private sector, improve its agricultural production, create jobs for youths, bolster its economic infrastructure, strengthen its institutions and mobilize human resources for the delivery of social services. South Africa's past efforts to supply electricity to Freetown and its ongoing engagement in the training of medical doctors should be seen within that context.

57. **Ms. Anderson** (Ireland) said that her delegation fully endorsed the recommendations in the joint progress report, particularly the focus on good governance and the rule of law, illicit drug trafficking, youth unemployment and gender equality. As proof that Ireland supported Sierra Leone's peacebuilding efforts, it had provided €46 million in bilateral development assistance to Sierra Leone between 2005 and 2009 and had promised to spend €10 million over the next 18 months to support the Agenda for Change.

58. The Government should be commended for its efforts in many areas, including health care, where it had prioritized the health of women and children through its free health-care initiative. In the agricultural sector, Ireland would continue to support Sierra Leone, with a particular emphasis on nutrition and smallholder agriculture. A new Irish aid development cooperation strategy for Sierra Leone for the period 2010 to 2012 was being finalized, focusing on social priorities. Ireland would also support all efforts to ensure that the 2012 elections were fair and free.

59. **Mr. Lennartsson** (Sweden) said that it was encouraging to see progress being made in many areas vital to the consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone and that important lessons could be learned from the manner in which the Peacebuilding Commission engaged with that country. His delegation welcomed the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change and fully endorsed the recommendations of the outcome document. The Government of Sierra Leone should be commended for its leadership and for taking steps to address peacebuilding challenges, including corruption, drug trafficking and youth unemployment. Sweden would continue to support the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which was vital for peace consolidation.

60. His delegation welcomed the configuration's initiative to develop a resource mobilization strategy in support of the Agenda for Change and to ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission delivered on its commitment to ensure free and fair elections in 2012 and peace consolidation in Sierra Leone.

61. **Mr. Moretti** (Brazil) said that his delegation was pleased with the progress made in peace consolidation and development in Sierra Leone, particularly in the promotion of political dialogue and the fight against corruption and drug trafficking. Nonetheless, the country faced two critical challenges. With regard to youth unemployment, young people with few economic prospects were particularly vulnerable to destabilizing political rhetoric and deserved special attention. It was therefore encouraging to see that youth unemployment was one of the key issues taken up in the Government's Agenda for Change. With regard to the development of natural resources, the focus should continue to be on ensuring that the people of Sierra Leone benefited fully from increased investments while avoiding the potential risks associated with the exploitation of those resources. His delegation would support any efforts to assist Sierra Leone in that regard.

62. **Mr. Parham** (United Kingdom) welcomed the joint progress report and the high profile given to peacebuilding operations in Sierra Leone. The Peacebuilding Commission's focus on good governance, the rule of law and combating drug trafficking was appropriate. The Peacebuilding Commission and the international community were committed to supporting the Government as it prepared for the 2012 elections, in order to ensure that the elections further embedded a peaceful democracy in Sierra Leone. While the focus on the elections was laudable, a concerted commitment beyond the next two

years was still required to lift Sierra Leone out of poverty.

63. Since the special session of the Peacebuilding Commission held in June 2009, there had been increased commercial activity to foster inward investment in the country, which would in turn result in more employment opportunities; an enlarged and more stable tax base; and greater investments beyond Freetown. The international community would also benefit because as the country's income through trade and investment increased, its reliance on international donor support would decrease. The United Kingdom was pleased to have hosted the investment conference for Sierra Leone in November 2009, which showcased the opportunities available in Sierra Leone without hiding any of the attendant challenges. His delegation expected the Security Council to adopt the draft resolution lifting sanctions against Sierra Leone, as a demonstration to the international community that Sierra Leone had come a long way and was open for business.

64. However, corruption and good governance remained formidable hurdles for the Government and people of Sierra Leone to overcome in developing their economy. The country must ensure that its extensive natural resource base was managed wisely for the benefit of its people. With the appointment of a new Anti-Corruption Commissioner, the hope was that the fight against corruption would be even more vigorous. Major improvements had been made in security measures, including the elimination of the need for the Government to resort to the military rather than the police to tackle public disorder.

65. Illicit drug trafficking was a potential destabilizing force which could undermine the ability of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Government to deliver on the Agenda for Change. The regional approach recommended by the Peacebuilding Commission for combating drug trafficking was the right one. Sierra Leone's anti-narcotics work was widely recognized as a success which could be replicated elsewhere in the subregion. The integrated approach to peacebuilding adopted in Sierra Leone could provide valuable lessons and best practices for other post-conflict and peacebuilding environments around the world.

66. **Ms. Meyer** (World Bank) said that the joint progress report on the Agenda for Change captured the key priorities for further progress in Sierra Leone. While Sierra Leone had made improvements in many areas, it still faced a number of challenges. The Government should ensure that support from its partners was effective and contributed to development outcomes. Measures to foster growth and alleviate poverty should be central to the peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone. The World Bank would continue to support Sierra Leone on the basis of its Joint Country Assistance Strategy with the African Development Bank. In the previous fiscal year, the World Bank had provided more than $100 million in financial aid to Sierra Leone through budget support and major sectoral programmes. It would continue to work with the United Nations and other partners to support the Government of Sierra Leone in its efforts to achieve sustainable peace and economic development.

67. **Ms. Strauss** (International Organization for Migration) said that her delegation recognized the progress made towards peace, stability and democracy in Sierra Leone and the important contribution of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund to that effort. As a member of the United Nations country team, her organization fully supported the Joint Vision of the United Nations Family for Sierra Leone. It also supported the call for further financial assistance from the Peacebuilding Fund and donors, which was vital for sustainable peace in the country.

68. Her delegation supported the Sierra Leone reparations programme established in 2008 to redress some of the worst consequences of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law recorded during the conflict. The start of the programme was made possible with a contribution of $3 million from the Peacebuilding Fund. The International Organization for Migration had provided technical assistance and capacity-building services to the Government of Sierra Leone as part of that programme. To date, more than 32,000 vulnerable victims, including amputees, victims of sexual violence, children of war and war widows had filed requests for reparation. Some 20,000 of them had received cash allowances, educational support or other forms of reparation. In 2010, the reparations programme had received an additional $1 million from the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to End Violence against Women, for the provision of vocational training and a cash allowance to some of the most vulnerable victims of sexual violence.

69. Despite that positive start, the reparations programme was in dire need of additional funding. Failure to sustain the programme could further frustrate victims, as their fate stood in stark contrast to that of former combatants, who had received financial assistance and training as part of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. Her delegation hoped that the reparations programme would serve as a timely model for women who continued to suffer violence and abuse in conflicts around the world. The programme should continue to be sustained on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (1997).

70. **The Chairperson** said that the slow pace of contributions to the multi-donor trust fund was a serious concern, especially as it reflected best practice on aid effectiveness and remained the central mechanism for supporting the integrated model of peacebuilding established in Sierra Leone. Since funds had to date been received only from Canada and the United Nations "Delivering as One" funding window, he urged members of the configuration to consider making contributions.

71. **Mr. Habib** (Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights), speaking via video link from Freetown on behalf of civil society, said that the participation of civil society organizations in the recent review of the joint progress report had lent credence to the process. Their analysis had identified clear signs of a turnaround in key areas, including energy, infrastructure and the fight against corruption, as well as improvements in maternal and child health, thanks to the free health-care initiative, and the development of a favourable business environment. The peace effort in Sierra Leone was also contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

72. While they were grateful to the Commission and to Sierra Leone's international development partners for their continued support for peace consolidation, the civil society organizations he represented hoped to be able to participate more fully in future meetings of the Sierra Leone configuration and to continue working with the Government and its international development partners, not just in drafting reports but in implementing the actual plans; they were more than willing to provide an oversight role to ensure that donor goals were met. Lastly, he thanked the representatives of Member States for their input, especially the emphasis placed on youth empowerment, employment and the 2012 elections, which were crucial for civil society.

73. **Ms. Bangura** (Sierra Leone) said that the Government would work with its partners to address all the areas of concern raised during the meeting and to implement the various recommendations made.

74. **Mr. Kamara** (Sierra Leone) acknowledged the bilateral and multilateral pledges of support to Sierra Leone and confirmed that a strategy would be developed to follow them up. The Government was still in discussions with the Electoral Commission to establish the 2012 electoral budget; it was thought that a figure of between $30 million and $40 million, far below the $80 million originally indicated by the Electoral Commission, would be sufficient for the process to move forward, provided that some infrastructure improvements, including the introduction of a biometric system, as well as the constitutional referendum, were deferred and the bulk of the expenditure was focused on the electoral machinery, with a view to enhancing the existing voter registration and security systems. In that regard, Sierra Leone was studying the methods adopted by Kenya, which had proved effective.

75. While the Government remained concerned about corruption, illicit drug trafficking and youth unemployment, employment opportunities would expand in line with economic growth. The challenge was therefore to fund the drivers of growth, since investment in basic infrastructure such as roads, affordable electricity and water would have exponential multiplier effects on economic growth.

76. The country's health programme also remained important. Funding of about $93 million over three years had been sought when the programme was first launched in 2009; it had also been presented at the coordination meeting of the Arab funding agencies in Khartoum, with a view to raising $25 million over three years to finance the direct procurement of medicines.

77. In the absence of development and a lasting way out of poverty, Sierra Leone would fall back into conflict. Re-source mobilization was therefore at the heart of peacebuilding efforts.

78. The Chairperson said that the coming period would be critical for peace consolidation in Sierra Leone and for meeting its people's expectations for